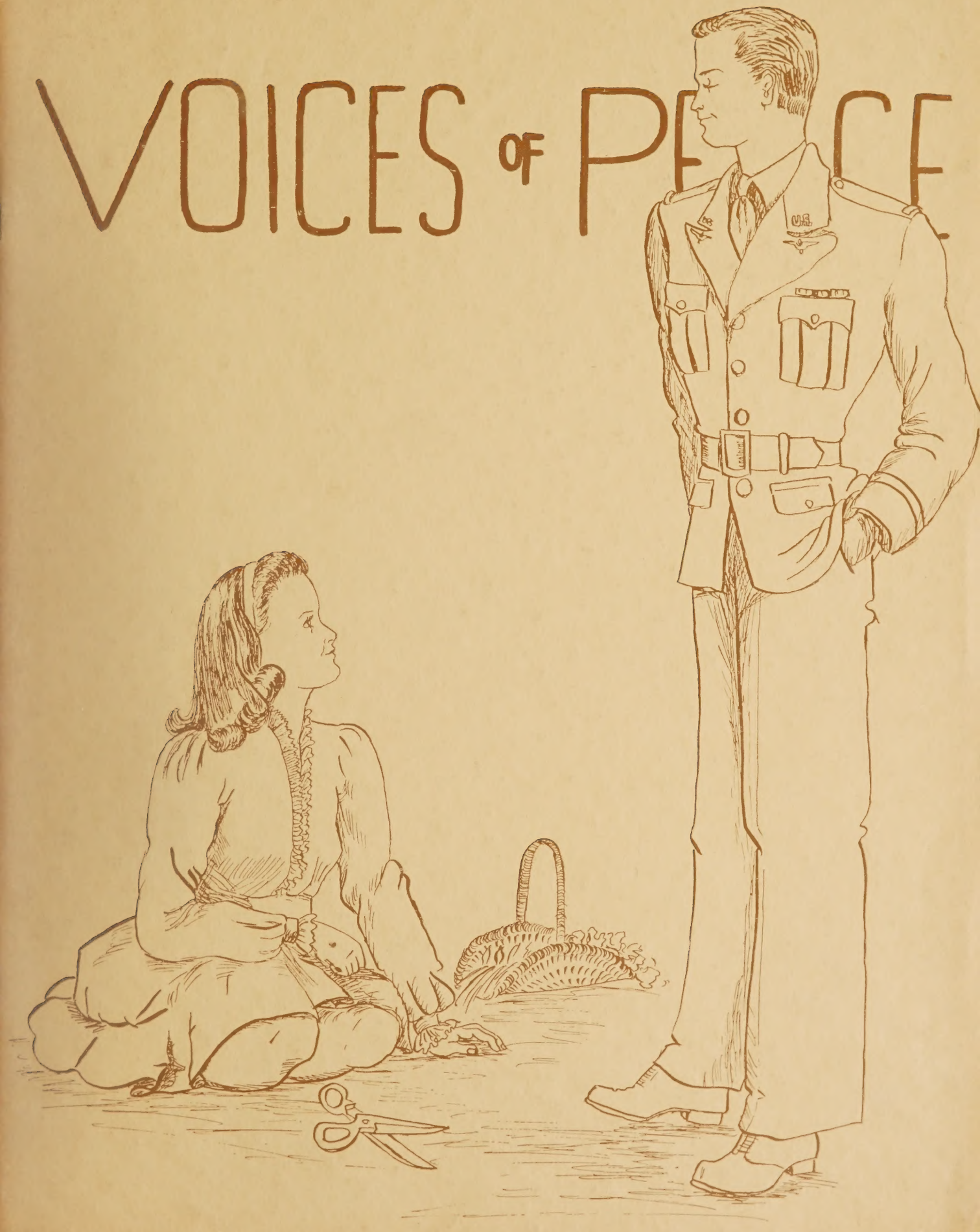
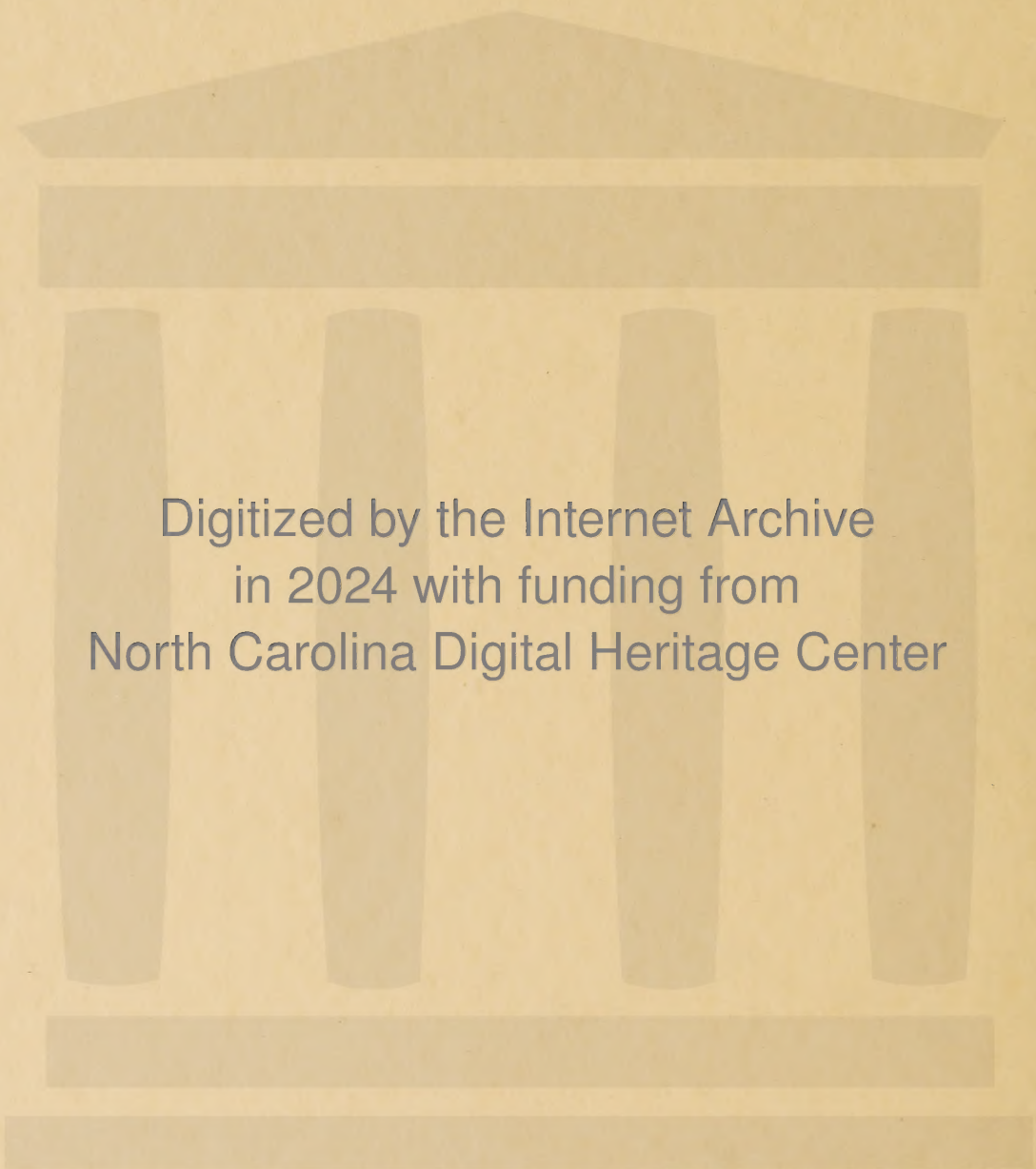
VOICES OF PEACE





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VOICES *of* PEACE

Volume XII Number One

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PEACE COLLEGE

RALEIGH, NORTH CAROLINA

May, 1944

To Youth in wartime and springtime,

we dedicate this volume.

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Curiosity

"How do you know it's spring?"
I asked a small child in the park.
She pointed to the underbrush
And there I spied a lark.

"How do you know it's spring?"
I asked the boy at the creek.
He pointed to three slender stalks
With petal bonnets chic.

"How do you know it's spring?"
I asked the girl with the apple cart.
She smiled at me and gaily laughed
And pointed to her heart.

ANN TYSOR

Doughboy's Reverie

In some foxhole's muck and mire
Beneath a ceaseless rain of fire.
And all that serves to make life dire,
Is it the song the raindrops sing
That makes me think of ethereal spring?

Of past springs I am fain to think,
Of mud on a shady river's brink
Where cattle stopped for their evening drink;
And there in its swiftly clouding bed,
Newborn flowers dipped their head.

The heavens yet with grey were ceiled
When Bob and I went to the field.
The stubborn new ground soon would yield
As plough dug deep the rich jet furrows
And rabbits fled from upturned burrows.

Picking berries for my favorite pie,
Or helping a fallen bird to fly,
Or listening in wonder to pine trees sigh:
All things that seemed commonplace then
Now a beautiful dream help spin.

Spring! when joy burst in my breast,
Spring! when heaven the dry earth bless'd,
Spring! when robins built their nest.
Death's slow steps to my ear but bring
The footfalls of eternal spring.

MARY F. BOONE

Spook and Spring

He was born in early winter—the small bit of coal black fur which we called Spook. Forever on the go, he would dash madly around in the bitter cold weather barking at nothing but space and occasional snowflakes. His intelligence, actions, and sizable streak of nosiness made him seem almost human at times; but for all of his human-like traits, he just didn't know about this business of spring.

But spring was inevitable. Several mild days succeeded by a very warm day caused quite a change around our house. Trees budded, birds sang, frogs croaked, and the heavy smell of damp warm earth rose from the freshly dug garden. Spook, upon being let out of the house, was a study of surprise. He stopped on the bottom back porch step, looked all around with a most questioning air, and lifted his nose to the wind. What he found was evidently pleasing to him, for off he trotted, tail high, intent on the world about him.

At his first stop he drew back with astonishment. Instead of the usual (to him) solid covering of ice over the pool there was something that looked like that stuff we gave him in a bowl in the house. Experimentally he stuck his nose in—it was the same stuff!

On an excursion around the pool he discovered something else. A peculiar sort of creature that had long legs and bulging eyes was hopping madly along before him. The ears pricked and a paw shot forward—but too late. With a splash the frog landed in the pool, disappearing from sight. Disappointed, Spook turned away.

But dejection didn't last long, for as he trotted along the side of the house, he found a treasure: a much chewed on, very dried-out bone. And somehow, although he had never done it before, he decided to bury this treasure. Most dogs prefer a freshly dug and planted flower garden and Spooky, being no exception, headed for the jonquil bed. With the help of instinct he proceeded to dig, but another surprise lay in store for him—long, wriggling earthworms. He sniffed excitedly, dug harder, but soon gave up in disgust and buried the bone. Unexciting creatures, those earthworms. They didn't offer an ounce of resistance.

What is spring? Well, if Spook could speak, he would say it is all water frogs, earthworms, interesting smells, and a peculiar kind of weather that makes one feel pleasantly alive.

MARGARET BROOKS

The Heartbeat of a Nation

It's the strong, steady hammering
Of the hearts of ready men,
It's the hurried, heady clamoring
Of the young and feminine.
It's the quiet, peaceful gait
Of the ones that years have known.
It's the thrill and leap of the spirit
As the flag of our country is shown;
It's the passion in singing our anthem
That pulses and throbs in our breasts—
It's the agony in our knowing
Of hearts forever at rest:
It's the good and the glad, and the bad and the sad—
It's the heartbeat of our nation.

CHARLOTTE STANTON

The First Day of Spring

Martha set the coal scuttle down by the outdoor bin. The big lumps of coal were covered with dew moisture, which reflected a blue sheen from above. It was odd—finding beauty in this dirty coal bin. Martha breathed deeply. A smell of the earth, warm and vital, engulfed her, and all about her as far as she could see in either direction newly sown grass was coming up to camouflage the dreary bareness of a thousand defense homes, identical except for variegated roofs.

Martha was happy. It was spring. She and Martin were together. One year ago in another springtime they had gone into a little church a thousand miles away and exchanged rings and emerged Mr. and Mrs. Martin Council. The next day Martin had gone to Quantico. When he came home again, he had worn a dark green uniform with the insignia of the U.S.M.C. and a gold bar. He had said, "Martha, they're moving me south. We'll be there three months."

And she had said, "Yes, dear, shall we take our set of Haviland?" So they had packed their trunks and boarded the crowded, smoky bus that finally deposited them in a town boasting two grocery stores, a house of general merchandise, a drug store, a bus station, and innumerable lonely Marines. The bus station had been crowded. Everywhere men and women were saying good-bye, some stoically, some tearfully, and some courageously lying. Martha had thought, "We have three months, then this." She had glanced quickly at Martin. He had been thinking too.

Today, the first day of spring, two weeks were left, and Martha was happy. She waved to the Captain's wife, who was hanging out clothes, filled her coal scuttle, and carried it onto her midget backdoor stoop. In the kitchen the sun poured through the red-trimmed curtains over the sink and the breakfast dishes. Martha ran steaming water over the soap flakes in the dishpan and watched them bubble into suds. She hummed "Tales From the Vienna Woods" as she washed away the remnants of egg and tomato juice. Carefully she dried the ten cent store china and placed it on a shelf below her beloved Haviland. She would use the Haviland tonight with her lace cloth when the couple in the next block came up to have dinner with them. She hoped Martin would remember to bring the cream cheese from the commissary.

She selected her mop and dust cloth and carried them into the tiny bedroom. After raising the shades she began to clear the debris that resulted every morning in the struggle to get Martin to the base by 7 a.m. She put together the top and bottom of masculine blue-striped pajamas, collected her mules and curlers, and dusted the room. It was a pretty room. They had covered their bargain furniture in a fresh coat of paint and hidden the orange crate structure of their bedside tables with gay chintz. Her table was neat. A book of verse, nail polish, a fountain pen, a bowl of pansies. Martin's table was characteristic of him—his imported cigarettes, a box of cough drops, a murder novel, an absurd, framed snapshot of Martha with his mother and dad at the beach.

With a resolve to wax the floor by the end of the week, Martha went on to the living room. She switched on the radio before she began to straighten the room. (It really did not need straightening.) The sweeping went faster to Harry James and Tommy Dorsey. Then she dusted. Dusting this room was fun. There were so many things she liked to touch in here. There were the books on the shelves by the fireplace: economics for Martin's post-war business, an atlas for Martha, and books like Galsworthy, Frost, Sheean, Benchley for the present. There were the antique vases on either end of the mantel, a wedding gift. There were the albums of records, worn from use and travel. There was the furniture itself, glamorous

in slip covers. Martha dusted the rocker and Martin's comfortable chair, and whisked over the radio. As "Star Dust" ended, she straightened up and grinned happily to herself. "Right on schedule; I'll make Martin a tolerable wife some day."

The radio announcer said, "Smith Furniture Store brings you the local news. At 9:30 this morning there was a delayed explosion on the base. While an investigation was being made, the charge went off, killing two enlisted men and permanently blinding the officer in charge, Second Lieutenant Martin Council. The damage to equipment was negligible. Let us remind you that this is the first day of spring. Come in and see our selection of spring furnishings."

ELEANOR CRAIG

God's Seasons

War is God's winter
Full of dark and bitter hate—
Sunless days of fear and sorrow,
Slashing winds so desolate.

Then out of the din of awful war
We hear the voices sing:
God will not forget us yet;
He will send His peace, His spring.

BOBBIE REINS

The Unbroken Relay

I saw her come, fantastic sprite, one carefree sunny day;
She danced and gaily laughed along her flower-studded way;
She touched the world with greenness—she scented sweet the air
And cleared the sky of winter's grey to fling clear blue up there.

But summer's sultry weather came and with it came the days
Of heat and rain and thunderclouds, of hail and sun and haze.
The swimming hole was ofttimes used and fishing was the way
Many a barefoot freckled boy spent a summer's day.

Fall soon followed with its hues of yellow, gold, and brown;
And all the country's barefoot boys went back to school in town.
The football season opened; the air was cool and crisp
While burning leaves sent up their smoke in many a curling wisp.

The trees were bare; the air was sharp as winter blustered in,
And wintry blasts outside the house created one vast din.
But just around the corner with Yuletide joy and cheer
Arrived once more to greet us all the glorious New Year.

It seems so odd the seasons should keep right on the same—
Keep coming in and going out in Nature's ceaseless game.
Serene, untroubled, still they stand despite all wars and strife:
Eternally they keep the flame—the free man's way of life.

MARGARET BROOKS

Definition

I can tell you what war is
Without ever having been in battle,
Or fired a gun or worn a uniform.
Though I am young in years
I have an inkling of what war is about.

My war is not the war of the soldier,
For his war is hell
And mine is only inconvenience
And occasional heartbreak.

War is the yearning and fear in
Every mother's heart for someone
Far away who may not come back—
Or who may come back—too soon.

War is the dirty-blonde pick-up
Waiting under the warning corner light.
Stop . . . Caution . . . Go . . .
And, as the lights become mere haze,
Another pair—the navy blue and
The faded blonde—saunter into nowhere.

War is an excuse for high, unnatural
Living, for heartless Indian giving,
For increased "juvenile delinquency,"
For wage disputes and labor contention,
For rationing and color discrimination.
—Color discrimination when, 'way across
The ocean on some distant, unfamiliar hill,
Some chocolate-colored soldier fights
Just as hard as John, or Bob, or Bill.

War is a picture in a magazine of
A huddled group of hungry, gaunt people
With haunting eyes and bloated stomachs.
—Or a newsreel showing the very latest
In blood, and death, and filth.

And, oh yes, I almost forgot:
War is a feeling which comes with the
Sound of marching feet, or the
Sight of forty-eight stars
On a background of brilliant blue.

But, more than all of this,
War is to me a pair of socks
Of the brightest, gayest plaid,
That this Christmas will be khaki.

CATHERINE SLOAN

Two Friends

O winter in her soft gray gown
With petticoat of snowy lace
That in the hesitant morn hangs down
'Til sunshine shows his face:

O winter in her silver dress
With brown and russet stain
Pattern-shaped clamped to her breast
By glistening studs of rain:

O winter in her cloak of night—
Her breath so sharp, her perfume rare,
Her massive shoulders cold and white,
Her trembling fingers bare:

The winter is my city friend.
Her clothes cause adoration;
Her charm is one that seems to blend
With her practiced sophistication.

But now, O winter, cease your show.
You are getting vain;
So fold away your cloak of snow,
Your dress of mist and rain,

For in some quiet suburban place
Spring has tripped the ground,
And in her swift and nymph-like grace
Left there her soft green gown.

Her golden hair bears one fair flower.
Just how did the blossom get in it?
She stepped behind an April shower
Just long enough to pin it.

O spring, my little country maid,
My joy, have thou no fears,
E'en though the sun will cast some shade
And laughter bring warm tears.

Mary Florence Boone

"What a Beautiful Day!"

"But, Daddy—" an agonized young voice pleaded.

"For the one hundredth time, you cannot have the car to take Susan or any other young female to that dance if Hedy Lamarr or the President of the United States is going to be there! You seem to think that little A sticker on our windshield is to help children learn their alphabet! Well, it isn't!"

"But, Daddy, it's the Spring Prom!"

"I don't care if it's the River Prom, or the Lake or any other kind of Water Prom, you are not taking the car. I got along perfectly all right with your mother when we were courting, and I certainly didn't have any car. Now if you want to take this Susan dancing, you'll just have to walk or else get a bicycle built for two. And please quit calling me at the office. Good-bye, son."

A sharp click sounded. Derek slowly replaced the phone on its cradle and groaned, "Aw, gee whiz. What's a guy to do! Picture Susan Jennings walking to the prom! Gas rationing! If I had Hitler handy, I'd choke him so quick he wouldn't even have a chance to think about yelling 'uncle' or 'Tojo' either, for that matter."

Derek stared through the window with utter disgust at a bluebird singing gaily in the forsythia bush.

"Phooey," he sighed. "That's okay, just wait till I'm eighteen. So help me, I'll join the Marines so quick it won't even be funny. It won't be so very long either. About six months and I'll be in."

The back door banged and an Indian war-whoop echoed through the house. A long pair of pigtails with a slight body attached swung into view.

"Whee!" screamed Corky. "I can go!"

Derek's eight-year-old sister gazed at him for a moment in her new-found rapture and then, noticing his crestfallen appearance, asked quickly, "What's the matter? Huh?"

Derek returned her gaze and groaned, "You ask me, 'What's the matter?' I ask you, 'What isn't the matter!' Oh, oh, what a world! What a day!"

Corky glanced out at the blue sky and brilliant sunshine and immediately answered, "I don't see anything wrong with it. It's not raining and besides, Mother said I could spend the night with Jessie!"

"Jessie," pondered Derek, "who's Jessie?"

"She's in my grade and she lives on a pretty farm out in the country and her daddy has lots of horses and a carriage and she's going to spend the night with me and I'm going to spend Saturday night with her!"

"Corky, my dear little sister," croaked Derek, "will you ever learn not to use more than ten *and's* in one breath? How are you going to get out there? Don't dare tell me Daddy's going to take you. If he is, there's not any justice at all in this world."

"No," said Corky, "he's not. Jessie's daddy's coming after me in his horse and carriage."

"Horse and carriage," scoffed Derek. "My dear young lady, I must say, you're getting awfully modern."

"That's all right," answered Corky as she headed for the kitchen and the cookie jar. "It'll get you there."

An idea began to take shape in Derek's head. "Say," he murmured, "why didn't I think of that before. Gee whiz, why not? After all, there's a war on."

Between mouthfuls of ginger cookies, Corky continued her conversation. "Jessie says he's awful proud of it. He hardly ever lets anybody else drive it."

"He doesn't? Oh, shucks. But look, Corky, do you suppose . . . Say, how far is it out there?" demanded Derek.

Corky replied and gave rather vague directions as to the location of Mr. Turner's farm, punctuated with, "But why, Derek? What do you want to know for?"

Derek gave no answer but merely grabbed a handful of cookies and rushed for his bike, yelling back to Corky, "Tell Mom I won't be gone long."

Half an hour later, Derek was talking persuasively to Mr. Turner.

"Well, look, sir. You're short of help, aren't you?"

"Who isn't, since they started that cock-eyed shipyard in town?" responded Mr. Turner.

"Well, suppose I'd come over every Saturday for a month and help you? I know how to milk cows . . . I think. That would be enough just to use it Saturday night, wouldn't it?"

"All right, son," agreed Mr. Turner. "I reckon you can. But you better be plenty careful."

"Yes, sir, I surely will! Thank you, sir!" exclaimed Derek, and he shot off on his bike.

In almost no time, he was home and busy at the phone dialing a certain young lady's number.

"Hello. Is this Susan? Say, Susan, would you mind very much riding to the prom in a shiny black carriage that's drawn by a big bay horse and driven by me? . . . Oh, say, that's wonderful! And look, Susan, do you like the Marines? . . . Oh, gee, swell! Bye, Susan!"

Derek gently placed the phone on its cradle, heaved a deep sigh, and wandered out the front door whistling cheerfully, "Oh, What a Beautiful Morning, Oh, What a Beautiful Day!"

Martha Jane Pearsall

Solution

One hears young voices cry
What should I live for?
For today when war
Is smashing lives about me?
For Spring, the grim, sardonic
Antithesis of death?
For youth, when all the best
Of youth is dying—
For age, staid, respectable,
Creator of our modern Hades?
Why live? What good the pretense?
The answer, dim accumulation
From the very brink of time,
Shrieks, Live! Live for life,
Live the Spring as the birth
And not the opposite of death.
Live youth as a preparation
For age, for dignity and wisdom.
Live today with full appreciation
So that if death be our lot
Tomorrow, we can accept it
With full knowledge that life
Was ours to live, and we lived it
To the very hilt, and found
Perfection in the living.

Charlotte Stanton

To the First Violet

In a field of green and brown,
In a forest lacking sound,
Among wild onions, sour weeds,
Aimless vines, and shadowing reeds;
Pushing through the rich decay,
Your tender leaves have found a way
And made for you a dark green bed,
Holder of the slender body; guardian of your head.

How mystically you smile at me.
Your yellow eye holds secrecy;
Or has the sun just kissed it so
To make its mellow beauty glow?

The deeper petal is your chin,
Dark as twilight in the glen;
While on the summit of your head,
Diamonded with sky-tears shed,
'Tis nearly blue—
Yet a delicate hue,
The choice of Mother Nature's color scheme,
Unsurpassed in artist's dream.

Do you fear the deep, dark wood,
O blossom of sweet flowerhood?
Why came you here to dwell?
What joyous tidings could you tell?
Are you "The Raven" of your race?
Came you to gaze upon this place,
This little bit of molded earth,
To await your sisters' birth?

In your own quiet modest way
Will you call to them and say:
"Come, come, let us gladden the eye of man;
Live for his joy and die in his hand"?
Does this go on in your purple brain,
And yet you wait in that lonely land
Smiling shyly—awaiting death,
Giving flavor to spring's sweet breath?

Is your mission to the earth
To lessen natural beauty's dearth?
When you receive a carefree kiss
Is that the reason you smile in bliss?
Is that why solemnly you dance
Beneath man's undeserving glance?

From out the depths of solitude
You give true cause for beatitude.
You shame the man who dares to fret,
Oh, tiny, silent violet.

I speak and fancy that you hear—
Have I the audience of your bluish ear?
Who gave that faint, heart-reaching sigh?
Did you nod before my eye?

I leave your riddle still unriddled,
My own self feeling much belittled.
But, I say! I'm glad we met
Shy, fantastic violet.

Mary F. Boone

Retribution

The little colonel from Camp Hasseltine walked importantly into the office of the chief executive of Brownlow's Munitions Works and blurted without introduction the regret of the U. S. Army in the matter of property but the camp officials did deem it necessary to expand their club next door to the allotted area, which included another inch: the Brownlow Administration Building covered the inch and it would be much appreciated if they would uncover it.

The executive listened attentively until the colonel had exhausted himself. Then deliberately and with thought he said that he would make the necessary arrangements to take care of the matter immediately.

Two weeks later the Brownlow wrecking-crew had completed its assignment and the army contractors began their assignment. In a limited time the army officers were viewing with satisfaction their enlarged quarters.

It was not too long before the little colonel had a visit from the chief executive of Brownlow. In a familiar, calm tone he addressed his words directly to his surprised host, "My deah colonel, it may interest you to know that since my building had two whole inches removed, we now find yours an inch over on our property."

Linda Cobb

Tomorrow's Plan

Youth has a task, tremendous big,
Much heard of and much talked about.
Our fathers say that they have failed,
That we must carry new plans out.

Tomorrow's world is ours to build
On lasting things and these alone.
We will not fail; we know that when
The night is blackest, stars have shown.

Margaret Brooks

Letter, 1944

Dear John,

Funny that I should write to you at this time—but then, I just heard the news.

No one else knows yet, John. It will be our secret for a while. I slipped out the door and even though it was dark, I found my way down the path to the sea. The moon is very lovely tonight, shining on the ocean—but then, you must be seeing it too; for I feel that with a movement of my hand I could touch your dear, beloved face.

That is our moon—mine and yours. The whole world is ours. We have died a thousand deaths and come out living.

Lost, my heart is floating on a sea of unshed tears—because you died. . . . I don't know why you died—unless you died that I might live. I only wish now that I might die—but Death is not that kind. Someone has said that hell is a separation, that heaven is a going home to those we love. If that is so . . . I hope that I shall find my heaven, soon.

Mary

Mary McLelland

A Soldier's Thought

Another day,
And here I am
Alive and well.
Yes, I might say
I'm feeling swell,
In spite of the Japs
And in spite of the trail.

Does it grieve you?
Then I'm sorry,
For I refuse to stop.
And so tomorrow
I'll try again—
Perhaps I'll get by again,
For I'm still a fighting man.

It's planned well,
And before warning:
The machine gun,
And burst bombs
Thrown in the night
Intend my doom to spell—
But all in vain.
Despite them, I will fight.

Rachel Allen

How We Will Preserve Democracy

No democracy can survive if we abuse the two freedoms of communication: the freedom of press and speech. If we are one of the peoples who are mouthpieces for propaganda, we are putting a mortgage on our freedom. We cannot print unrestrained war news and expect to go on living in the way we have in the past. The fact that we have these freedoms does not mean that we are to take them for granted. We must be broad-minded enough to put a huge price on our liberties and know just how much advantage we can take of each.

Before we are able to know how to take advantage of freedom without tearing it down, the citizens must be educated so that they understand the operations of our government. Too often the average American is swayed by fiction as seen in movies and cheap adventure stories. He must be taught that no one person alone can come out a hero, but that we must all be in the limelight together. Ours is a show in which every character is a star; and if one fails to remember his lines, the show is a failure.

Every community, town, and state must take an active part and carry out its operations in our clean, freedom-swept democracy, the country where everyone is the law, where each of us can speak, write, and worship as he thinks best. If we are as intelligent as our ancestors who fought for what they thought was the most wonderful thing ever created, democracy will survive.

Evelyn Garner

Being an Individual

Youth is often disheartened as the great deeds of great men are set before him. Why? It is because the deeds of the men have been held up for admiration rather than their *characters.* Though a limited few can be Lincolns, Franklins, or Washingtons, all can develop the character that lay behind their deeds. How could you do this? By being yourself, your whole self, and doing your whole duty; then you will be accounted of great worth.

Youth is encouraged to be itself, to think its own thoughts, to be independent and self-reliant, not to be an echo or imitator. A carbon copy from a typewriter is never clear, but always burred and seldom worth anything.

Note that America's great men have been men of independent thoughts: Lincoln never followed the crowd; Washington was one of the few wealthy and socially prominent men of his day to take up the cause of America; Franklin refused to be bound by custom and to bow to reputation. Were not they all great men with crowd followings?

As in the United States, so in other countries. Heroes have always been the original men and women who have stood steadfastly by their own ideals when the whole cry was on the other side. It is the man who thinks for himself and believes in himself who leads the crowd of copyists and imitators, those who are afraid of being called "cranks," forgetting that cranks also make things go!

Wake up and live, youth, and remember that anything unique is invaluable; develop your capacities to their utmost, using temporary failure but as a challenge to hoped-for success; be true to your best self, that some day *you* may become a Person.

Linda Cobb

Flunk-Slip Bonnie

Bonnie gets a flunk-slip
  Then a letter from her ma;
Next a talk from Dr. Pressly
  And a jack-up from her pa.

Bonnie feels so awful lonely,
  Evil thoughts with her abide;
First she thinks of cryin' and murderin',
  Then concludes with suicide.

So she borrows a secret pistol,
  Seats herself upon the bed;
Puts the flunk-slip down beside her,
  And the pistol to her head.

But at this nigh fatal moment,
  In comes her roommate raising sand;
Saying, "Wake up, Bonnie,
  You've been snoring like a man."

Bonnie E. Garner